

STATEMENT OF
JEFFREY HOLMSTEAD NOMINEE FOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
OFFICE OF AIR AND RADIATION
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

MAY 17, 2001

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify before you this morning. It is an honor to be here today as the President's nominee to be the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Air and Radiation. I am especially pleased to be joined by my wife, my four children, and my parents.

I obviously hope that this Committee and the full Senate will see fit to confirm me, because I am eager to have the chance to work with Governor Christie Todd Whitman as she starts her tenure as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. I believe that, with the support of President Bush and this Committee, I will be able to help Governor Whitman make continued improvements in the quality of the nation's air while at the same time making EPA's regulatory programs more effective and less costly.

As Senator Campbell can understand, growing up in Boulder, Colorado, gave me a great appreciation for the environment and the outdoors. Even so, when I graduated from law school in 1987, I did not plan to spend my career working to solve environmental problems. But after a year of practicing corporate law, I had the opportunity to serve in the White House of President George Herbert Walker Bush, where I spent much of my time working on environmental issues. After arriving in the White House, I soon found that the work of trying to find effective ways to protect and improve the environment was more challenging and rewarding than anything else I could imagine. I have focused

my career on environmental issues ever since. It is a great honor to be nominated by President George W. Bush to continue working on the issues that are of such vital importance to all of us and our children.

I share Governor Whitman's commitment to protecting the environment of the United States and her goal of leaving the environment cleaner than she found it. I recognize that the job for which I am seeking confirmation will present many challenges and many difficult issues. But I believe we can overcome the challenges and resolve the difficult issues. My optimism comes from a sincere belief that we all share the goal of using good science to identify our environmental goals, and good policy to achieve those goals cost-effectively. Starting from this shared goal, I hope to have the opportunity to work with all stakeholders to increase cooperation and decrease the acrimony that has occasionally accompanied these issues in the past.

I think that we can take pride in the progress that all of us – States, industry, advocacy groups, Congress, and EPA – have made in cleaning the nation's air over the last three decades. Since 1970, when Congress first passed the Clean Air Act, we have made many advances in the science and the art of environmental protection. Both EPA and the States have become more effective at designing programs to achieve our common goals. We are using more market-based strategies and other flexible regulatory tools. More and more, state and local agencies are working with businesses and communities to solve environmental problems as partners. EPA has been both a partner and often a leader in these efforts. But I believe that EPA can do even more.

In other areas of endeavor it has been said that we can see further than the people who came before us because we stand on their shoulders. Thirty-one years have passed since the Clean Air Act of 1970, 24 years since the amendments of 1977 and 11 years since the President's father signed the

1990 Clean Air Act Amendments into law. Much progress has been made over the years – and just as importantly, much has been learned. These lessons put us on a path of continued progress for the future.

Just because a program gets results does not mean it cannot be improved. An effort to make a program simpler and more flexible should not be viewed as an excuse to make it less effective. If we are open to new possibilities, if we actively seek out the best ideas from everyone – our partners, our stakeholders, and our staff – we can develop better approaches for protecting and improving our nation's air. By basing those approaches on the best available science, by focusing on results and allowing people to find innovative ways to achieve those results, we can continue to improve the quality of the nation's air and make our regulatory programs more effective and less costly.

If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staffs to achieve these goals.

Thank you.